FELDSPAR

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: U.S. feldspar production in 1999 had an estimated value of $45 million. The three largest producers accounted for about two-thirds of the output, with six other companies supplying the remainder. Operations in North Carolina provided about 45% of the output and facilities in six other States contributed smaller quantities. Feldspar processors reported coproduct recovery of mica and silica sand.

Feldspar is ground for industry use to about 20 mesh for glassmaking and to 200 mesh or finer for most ceramic and filler applications. It was estimated that feldspar shipments went to at least 30 States and to foreign destinations, including Canada and Mexico. In ceramics and glass, feldspar functions as a flux. Estimated 1999 end-use distribution of domestic feldspar was glass, 70%, and pottery and other, 30%.

Salient Statistics—United States:	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**[e]
Production, marketable	880	890	[e]900	[e]820	900
Imports for consumption	9	7	9	7	6
Exports	15	10	7	13	7
Consumption, apparent	874	887	[e]900	[e]814	899
Price, average value, marketable production, dollars per ton	42.50	44.27	[e]47.22	49.76	50.36
Stocks, producer, yearend[1]	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and preparation plant, number	400	400	400	400	400
Net import reliance[2] as a percent of apparent consumption	E	E	([3])	E	E

Recycling: Insignificant.

Import Sources (1995-98): Mexico, 96%; and other, 4%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12/31/99
Feldspar	2529.10.0000	Free.

Depletion Allowance: 15% (Domestic and foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

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FELDSPAR

Events, Trends, and Issues: Glass and ceramic whiteware, such as dinnerware, sanitaryware, and tile, continued to be major end uses of feldspar. An active housing and remodeling market resulted in an 8.7% increase in dollar value to $1.7 billion in the U.S. ceramic tile market in 1998 and a projected 6.7% increase in 1999, according to a nongovernment source. However, import penetration reached 67% of the U.S. tile market in 1998. Italy, Spain, and Mexico accounted for about 78% of all U.S. tile imports.

In dinnerware, the domestic manufacturers' share of the U.S. market fell to 27% in 1998. China supplied 39% of total imported dinnerware and the United Kingdom supplied 13%.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves and reserve base[4]
	1998	1999[e]	
United States	[e]820	900	Significant in the United States and assumed to be similar in other countries.
Brazil	200	220	
Colombia	55	60	
France	500	500	
Germany	450	450	
India	88	90	
Italy	2,300	2,300	
Japan	52	60	
Korea, Republic of	320	330	
Mexico	160	170	
Norway	75	80	
Portugal	100	100	
Russia	40	50	
Spain	425	425	
Thailand	600	600	
Turkey	1,000	1,000	
Uzbekistan	70	80	
Venezuela	170	160	
Other countries	655	725	
World total	8,080	8,300	

World Resources: Identified and hypothetical resources of feldspar are more than adequate to meet anticipated world demand. Quantitative data on resources of feldspar existing in granites, pegmatites, and feldspathic sands generally have not been compiled. There is ample geologic evidence that resources are large, although not always conveniently accessible to the principal centers of consumption.

Substitutes: Feldspar can be replaced in some of its end uses by feldspar-silica mixtures, clays, talc, pyrophyllite, spodumene, or electric-furnace slag. Imported nepheline syenite, however, was the major alternative material.

[e]Estimated. E Net exporter. NA Not available.
[1]Change in stocks assumed to be zero for apparent consumption and net import reliance calculations.
[2]Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.
[3]Negligible.
[4]See Appendix C for definitions.